



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

July 12, 2017

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Office of Inspector General Hotline Complaint 2017-0319

FROM: **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy**
Special Agent, Hotline Manager
Headquarters, Office of Inspector General

TO: Justina Fugh
Senior Counsel for Ethics
Office of General Counsel

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Inspector General (OIG), Hotline received an electronic message on June 29, 2017, from an EPA employee that wants to remain confidential. The message is requesting an OIG investigation into a questionable meeting between the EPA Administrator and DOW Chemical CEO on March 9, 2017. The message received by the Hotline is attached.

The Hotline forwarded this request to the EPA OIG, Office of Counsel, for review. The Hotline was notified that no action was planned by the OIG and this message should be forwarded to your office.

Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

We established EPA OIG Hotline Number 2017-0319, to document the complaint. However, we are referring this matter to your office for whatever action you determine necessary. Please inform the Hotline at **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy** within the next 5 calendar days that this referral was received. Please do not hesitate calling me at (202) **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy** if there are any questions.

Attachment:

To:
Subject:

Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy
FW: Pruitt Meeting with Dow CEO

I am forwarding this AP article to the OIG Hotline for consideration as to whether OIG should review any aspect of it. According to the article, Pruitt met with the Dow Corporation CEO and then shortly thereafter reversed a many-years-in-the-making action by EPA that was about to have banned a Dow-manufactured pesticide. Further, the article states that Pruitt's spokesman in April stated that Pruitt "had no meetings with Dow on this topic", when his now-released schedule discloses the meeting.

EPA chief met with Dow Chemical CEO before deciding not to ban toxic pesticide

A crop duster sprays a field just outside Headland, Ala., in 2009. (Dave Martin / Associated Press)

Associated Press

The Trump administration's top environmental official met privately with the chief executive of Dow Chemical shortly before reversing his agency's push to ban a widely used pesticide that health studies showed can harm children's brains, newly released records reveal.

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt's schedule shows he met with Dow CEO Andrew Liveris for about half an hour March 9 during a conference held at a Houston hotel. Twenty days later, Pruitt announced his decision to deny a petition to ban Dow's chlorpyrifos pesticide from being sprayed on food even though a review by his agency's scientists concluded that ingesting even minuscule amounts of the chemical can interfere with the brain development of fetuses and infants.

The EPA released a copy of Pruitt's March meeting schedule this month after several Freedom of Information Act requests.

Asked in April whether Pruitt had meet with Dow executives or lobbyists before his decision, EPA spokesman J.P. Freire replied: "We have had no meetings with Dow on this topic."

Paid Post

WHAT'S THIS?

Climate change is a reality, IU VP says, as school invests \$55M to address its impact

A Message from Indiana University Bloomington

IU plans to create a \$55 million Environmental Resilience Institute to forecast environmental change and predict how it will affect Indiana's businesses and residents.

[See More](#)

The EPA did not respond this week to questions about what Pruitt and Liveris discussed during their March 9 meeting, or whether the two had also met on other occasions.

Liveris has close ties to the Trump administration. He heads a White House manufacturing working group, and Dow wrote a \$1-million check to help underwrite the president's inaugural festivities.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has urged Pruitt to take chlorpyrifos off the market. The group representing more than 66,000 pediatricians and pediatric surgeons said Tuesday that it is "deeply alarmed" by Pruitt's decision to allow the pesticide's continued use.

"There is a wealth of science demonstrating the detrimental effects of chlorpyrifos exposure to developing fetuses, infants, children and pregnant women," the academy said in a letter to Pruitt. "The risk to infant and children's health and development is unambiguous."

The Associated Press reported in April that Dow was lobbying the Trump administration to “set aside” the findings of federal scientists that organophosphate pesticides, including chlorpyrifos, are also harmful to about 1,800 critically threatened or endangered species.

Read more: Dow Chemical is pushing Trump administration to ignore studies of toxic pesticide »

U.S. farmers spray more than 6 million pounds of chlorpyrifos each year on citrus fruits, apples, cherries and other crops, making it one of the most widely used pesticides in the world.

First developed as a chemical weapon before World War II, chlorpyrifos has been sold by Dow as a pesticide since the mid-1960s. It has been blamed for sickening dozens of farmworkers in recent years. Traces have been found in waterways, threatening fish, and experts say overuse of the pesticide could make targeted insects immune to it.

Under pressure from federal regulators over safety concerns, Dow withdrew chlorpyrifos for use as a home insecticide in 2000. The EPA placed “no-spray” buffer zones around sensitive sites, such as schools, in 2012.

But environmental and public health groups said those proposals don't go far enough and filed a federal lawsuit seeking a national ban on the pesticide.

In October 2015, the Obama administration proposed revoking the pesticide's use in response to a petition from the Natural Resources Defense Council and Pesticide Action Network North America. A risk assessment memo issued in November by nine EPA scientists concluded: “There is a breadth of information available on the potential adverse neurodevelopmental effects in infants and children as a result of prenatal exposure to chlorpyrifos.”